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## THE HIGHLAND DRESS.

By J. G. MACKAY.

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### II.—ANTIQUITY OF THE KILT.

'Se 'feile preasach tlachd mo ruin,  
'S osan nach ruig faisg an glùn,  
'S cota breac nam basan dhù,  
'S bonaid dhù-ghorm thogarrach.

IN the previous chapter we have given a description of Clan Tartans, proving conclusively that they were worn in the Highlands at a very remote period, and also that they were arranged into distinctive clan patterns, as we now have them. We will now proceed to give an account of the different forms in which the dress was worn, and as in most other matters referring to the Highlands the dress has been subjected to a great amount of ignorant criticism. We will at same time place before our readers indubitable evidence of the great age and authenticity of the dress.

The sculptured stones of Scotland give clear and decided evidence of the great antiquity of the dress, and their period may be said to extend from the sixth to the ninth century. There is one at Dupplin, in Perthshire; Forres, in Morayshire; and Nigg, in Ross-shire, each representing figures in the Highland dress.

Some years ago, a sculptured stone was dug up from the ruins of the Roman wall (which was constructed in the year 140), representing three figures dressed exactly in the ancient garb of the Gael. There is also a sculptured slab in the Antiquarian Museum, Edinburgh, which was found at Dull, in Perthshire, some years ago, which represents several figures in the Highland dress.

In Kilmuir, Skye, there is a rock bearing a natural representation of the dress. It is called "Creag an Fheilidh," or the rock of the Kilt, from its marked resemblance to the checkered plaits of the kilt. This name must be coeval with the arrival of the Gael in Skye, for, bearing a natural representation, it could not get the name from any event or accident.

In the Norwegian Sagas, in reference to the expedition of King Magnus to the Western Isles, in the year 1093, it is said *that he adopted the costumes in use in the western lands*, and likewise many of his followers; and for this he was called *Magnus Barefoot*. The seal of Alexander I., whose reign began in the year 1107, represents that monarch in the *feileadh-beag*, or kilt as now worn. King David I., who began his reign in the year 1124, and Malcolm IV. in 1153, used a seal identical with that used by Alexander I.; and their adopting it proves that they wore the dress represented.

The dress was anciently of various forms, to suit the requirements of the wearer. The "triubhais" or truis, were made of tartan, cut crossways, and worn tight to the skin, after the style of breeches, and fastened at the knee with a buckle. It required considerable skill to make a pair of truis, as the tartan had to be matched at the seams so as to show the pattern. The sets were generally smaller in the tartan than that used for plaids.

The "breacan-feile," or belted plaid, was made of twelve ells of tartan, *i.e.* six ells of double tartan, which, being plaited, was fastened round the body with a belt, the lower part forming the kilt, and the other half being fixed to the shoulder by a brooch, hung down behind, and thus formed the plaid, in the same shape as the belted plaids now used by the military, which is an imitation of it.

There was great neatness displayed in arranging the plaits, so as to show the set of the tartan. This was a particularly con-

venient form of the dress, as the plaid hung loosely behind ; it did not encumber the arms, and in wet weather could be thrown over the shoulders ; while in the event of camping out at night, it could be thrown loose, and covered the whole body. It was principally worn on warlike expeditions, or when going any distance from home. It was called the belted plaid from the fact of its being simply made of a piece of tartan, unsewn, and fixed round the body with a belt.

The "feileadh-beag," or little kilt, same as still worn, was made of six ells of single tartan, which, being plaited and sewn, was fixed round the waist with a strap, half a yard being left plain at each end, which crossed each other in front. This is one of the parts of the dress for which a modern invention is claimed. This claim, which first saw the light of day in the form of an anonymous letter in the *Scots Magazine*, in 1798, though echoed by several writers who took upon themselves to write on the Highlands, has never been admitted by any one who can be taken as an authority. The date of the pretended invention of the kilt is 1728. It is said that in that year Parkinson, the superintendent of the Lead Mines at Tyndrum, finding his Highland labourers encumbered with their belted plaids, taught them to separate the plaid from the kilt, and sew it in its present form.

To any one acquainted with the manners and customs of the Highlanders this must seem a very ridiculous and unlikely story, but, nevertheless, it has been accepted by many writers, none of whom, however, can give any proof for their assertion further than this anonymous scribbler, and it is surprising, after all the research of our learned antiquarians, to find even the editor\* of the latest edition of the "History of the Highland Clans" re-echoing such a silly fable.

Next to Ossian's poems there is no subject connected with the Highlands that has caused more discussion or ill-feeling than the reputed invention of the kilt. There is not a national movement in which the Highlanders are specially mentioned, but this fable is "trotted" out by jealous and acrimonious writers to smother our national pride.

It is unfortunate that the ancient Highlanders left so much

\* John S. Keltie, F.S.A.

of their history, customs, and manners to be recorded by others, who, from the remote and inaccessible nature of the country and their ignorance of the language, could not be expected to do them justice, and as in everything else, ancient writers on the Highlands are very obscure in their descriptions of the dress, and while they give a sort of an idea of the "breacan-feile," or belted plaid, as being the most complicated and attractive part of the dress, they pay little attention to the "feileadh-beag."

Martin, in his "Tour to the Western Isles," published in 1702, gives a very good account of it. He says—"The plaid is tied round the middle with a leather belt. It is plaited from the waste to the knee very nicely. This dress for footmen is found much easier and lighter than breeches or trowis." He also gives a description of the "breacan-guaille," or shoulder plaid, *which was only worn with the "feileadh-beag" or kilt.* He says—"The length of it is commonly seven double ells. The one end hangs by the middle over the left arm; the other, going round the body, hangs by the end over the left arm also. The right hand is to be at liberty to do anything upon occasion."

Martin visited St Kilda in 1697, and says—"The men at this day wear a short doublet to their waste; about that (*i.e.*, the waist) a double plat of plad, both ends joined together by the bone of a fulmar. The plad reaches no further than the knee, and is above the haunches girt about with a belt of leather." This is a most minute description of the "feileadh-beag," and should be sufficient in itself to put the matter beyond the possibility of a doubt, but we can bring forward even much stronger evidence than this. On the armorial bearings of the Burnets of Leys in Aberdeenshire, the dexter supporter is a "Highlander in hunting garb," viz.—*Feileadh-beag*, and short Highland jacket, exactly the same as worn at the present day; date of patent, 21st April 1626. Sir George Mackenzie, who died 37 years before Parkinson's time, says—"The Burnets of Leys carry a Highlander in Hunting garb, and a greyhound as supporter on their arms, to show that they were the King's foresters in the north."

The Mackenzies of Coul, in Ross-shire, have, as dexter supporter on their arms, a Highlander dressed in the kilt and shoulder plaid, same as worn at the present day; date of patent, 16th Oct.



1673. The clans Macrae and Macgillivray have also as supporters Highlanders dressed in the *feileadh-beag*.

In a book printed in London in 1720, "The Life of Mr Duncan Campbell," there is a drawing representing the subject of the work, dressed in an unmistakable *feileadh-beag* or kilt, with the following note referring to it. "Our young boy, now between six and seven, delighted in wearing a little bonnet and plaid, thinking it looked very manly in his countrymen. His father indulged him in that dress, which is truly antique and heroic." This is the nicest representation of the dress we have seen, the kilt, bonnet, hose, and everything so clear and distinct that it would pass muster at the present day.

In "Burt's Letters from the North of Scotland, 1728," also published in London, there are several plates showing the different forms of the dress, viz.—*Breacan an fheilidh*, or belted plaid; *feileadh-beag*, or kilt, with shoulder plaid, as now worn; and *triubhais*, or truis. He makes no mention of Parkinson, and he certainly would have done so if there was any truth in the story.

The *feileadh-beag* (philabeg) is often mentioned in Jacobite songs composed at the time of the rising of 1715. The kilt and plaid is also mentioned in a very old Gaelic song, *Macgriogair o Ruadh Shruith*. Besides all this, we have it on the testimony of Blind Harry that the great Scottish patriot Wallace wore the kilt. He tells us that when Wallace was in school in Dundee he was insulted and assaulted by the son of Selbye, the governor; and he points out most distinctly that he not only wore the Highland dress, which he calls "Ersche Mantill," but tells that "it war thi kynd to wer," showing most conclusively that Wallace was considered to be a Highlander, and that the tartan was his national dress.

We now hold that we have completely settled this question, and, in the face of such a chain of evidence, it is amusing to think that such a silly assertion should ever have been made. It betrays very great ignorance of the customs and manners of the Highlanders to suppose that, if they were sufficiently ingenious to design the tartan, and to plait it into the form of the belted-plaid, which is a very intricate contrivance, that they should not think of dividing the kilt and plaid, when occasion required it, without the assistance of an Englishman. The thing

is so positively absurd that we cannot conceive how any sensible person should repeat it.

We will now proceed to give a description of the various articles which compose the dress.

The doublet or coat (in Gaelic, *cota-gearr*) was sometimes made of tartan cloth, cut crossways, the size of the checks being less than in the kilt or plaid. This style of coat was called *cota fiaraidh*.

For every-day wear the coats were generally made of a drab cloth. This colour was produced by a mixture of natural black and white, with a quantity of crotal-dyed wool. This was called *cota lachdunn*. For full or court dress, the coats were made of velvet, and richly embroidered with silver lace and buttons. We have proof of velvet being used for coats at an early age. In the accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland, in August 1538, we find the following entry regarding a Highland dress for King James V.:—

"Item in the first for ij elnis ane quarter elne of variant colorit velvet to be the Kingis Grace, ane schort Heland coit. Price of the elne vi. lib. Summa xiiij. lib. x<sup>s</sup>.

"Item for iiii. elnis quarter elne greene taffatys to lyne the said coit with price of the elne x<sup>s</sup>. summa xxxij<sup>s</sup>. vi. d."

Hose.—Before the invention of knitting, the hose were made of tartan, the same as in the kilt. They were also made crossways, and required a great amount of ingenuity to match the checks. After knitting was invented, they were made of different patterns, and very great perfection was acquired in imitating the various checks of the tartan.

Shoes.—Martin says—"The shoes antiently wore were a piece of the Hide of a Deer, Cow, or Horse, with the hair on, being tied behind and before with a point of leather." This is the *cuaran*. It was much in the style of the sandals worn by Eastern nations. It is this that gave rise to the term, "Rough-footed Scots." "*Feumaidh fear nan cuaran éiridh uair roimh shear nam bròg*." Martin says again—"The generality now wear shoes, having one thin Sole only, and shaped after the right and left Foot, so that what is for one Foot will not serve the other." The shoes were usually peaked at the point. The uppers were of one piece, and sewn to the soles, and then turned inside out. They were open up the front, and drawn together with thongs. These shoes were called *brogan tionndaidh*.

I think it was a Lochcarron bard who said—

'S math thig osan air do chalp  
Brog bhiorach dhubh 's lughach lorg.

Shoe buckles are a modern addition to the dress, and I do not think they are any improvement.

Donnachadh Bân says—

Fhuair sinn ad agus cleòc  
'S cha bhuineadh an seors' ud dhuinn  
Bucail a' dunadh ar bròig  
'Se 'm barr-iall bu bhòiche leinn.

The sporrans were made of the skins of wild animals—badger, otter, wild cat, or goatskin. The latter were often ornamented with silver mountings, but they were neither so large nor so gaudy as those now worn.

The bonnet was of different shapes in different districts, but the broad form, such as is now styled "Prince Charlie," is the most ancient.

The dress was capable of being very richly ornamented. The plaid was fastened at the shoulder by a brooch of silver, often studded with precious stones, and embellished with devices of thistles, animals, etc. There was also a brooch worn in the bonnet, with the wearer's crest and motto engraved on it. In the bonnet was also the badge or *Suaicheantas* of the clan and usually one or more eagle's feathers, according to the rank of the wearer. A chief wore three, a chieftain two, a *duine-uasal* or gentleman one.

John Taylor, the Water Poet, made an excursion to Scotland in the year 1618, of which he published an account, under the title of the "Pennyless Pilgrimage," and in which there is an amusing description of the Highland dress. He says, "Their habit is shoosie with but one sole apiece, stockings which they call hose, made of a warm stuffe of divers colours, which they call tartan. As for breeches, many of them nor their forefathers never wore any, but, a jerkin of the same stuff as their hose is made, with a plaed about their shoulders, which is a mantle of divers colours, much finer and lighter stuffe than the hose, with blue flat caps on their heads, a handkerchief knit with two knots about ther necks, and thus they are atyred."

(To be continued.)

## CURIOUS SUPERSTITIONS IN TIREE.

By J. SANDS.

ALTHOUGH the inhabitants of Tiree are in general an intelligent, as well as kind-hearted, race, who would progress if they had an opportunity, some superstitions, which have descended from a very remote period, still linger amongst them. Customs which originated when the sun was an object of worship survive to this day, although the Gospel has been preached in the island since the year 565, when Baithean (a cousin of Columba's) landed at Soraby, and founded a monastery there. Marriage parties still take care to turn to the right hand (Deasail), and not to the left, when they enter the church. The same rule is observed when a body is to be laid in the grave. When boats are launched from the shore the bow is brought round (although it may be a little inconvenient) agreeably to the apparent course of the sun. Nine was a sacred number with the ancient Scandinavians, as well as Celts, and this part of the Pagan creed is still respected. Water taken from the tops of nine waves, and in which nine stones have been boiled, is believed to be an infallible cure for the jaundice. The shirt of the patient, after being dipped in this magic infusion, is put on wet. I was acquainted with a man on whom this remedy was recently tried, but without effect, as he was on the brink of death, and whisky had been ordered from Glasgow to regale the mourners at his funeral. As intoxicants are not procurable on the island (the Duke of Argyll having abolished all the public-houses) provident relatives are obliged to send for a supply to Glasgow when a death is anticipated. Water taken from nine springs or streams in which cresses grow, is also, when applied in the same way, believed to be an effectual cure for jaundice. On the west side of the island there is a rock with a hole in it, through which children are passed when suffering from whooping cough, or other complaints.

Sick cattle were, and probably still are, treated in a curious way. The doctor being provided with a cogue of cream and an oatcake, sits on the sick cow, or other animal, and repeats the

following verse, *nine* times *nine* times, taking a bit and a sip between each repetition :—

“ Greim is plug, mise air do mhuin,  
Ma bhitheas thu beo 's maith ;  
'S mar a bi leigear dhuit.”\*

The cream and the bannock are the doctor's fee.

When a gun is fired at a wedding, care is taken that the shots shall be odd numbers. Three is safe, five and nine are also considered lucky.

About five years ago a woman left her child upon the shore that it might be taken away by the fairies, and her own infant restored. She was obliged, however, to take back the changeling after it had been exposed for some hours, as the *daoine beaga* never appeared. At this date a minister on the island has refused to baptize the children of a parishioner, because he swears that a woman has bewitched his cows, and abstracted the virtue from their milk.

Some houses are believed to be haunted by fairies, although it is only certain gifted individuals who can see them. In one cabin they were wont to sit in swarms upon the rafters, and had the impudence even to drop down now and again, and seize a potato out of the pot. Eventually they became such a nuisance that the tenant of the house (who was a *taishear*) determined to build a new dwelling and to abandon the old one. Unfortunately, when the new cabin was almost finished, he (materials being scarce) took a stone out of the haunted hut, with the result that all the fairies came along with it, so that his new home was as much infested as the old one had been.

At Manna there is a little green hillock (which had probably been used to rest the coffin on, as it was being carried to the grave), but which was believed to possess magical properties. Not long ago, a stone lay upon the top, and fishermen were in the habit of turning the end of it towards any part of the horizon that they wished a breeze to come from. There is a story told about this hillock, which may be as well repeated in rhyme as in prose :—

\* This old rhyme was given to me by Mr John Maclean, the Tiree Bard, who has written some songs which are very popular in the island.

At Mannal, in Tìree, may still be seen  
 A *cnoc gorm*, or hillock, round and green,  
 Such as the fairies lived in long ago  
 (A tale that may be true for all we know),\*  
 And to this *cnoc* two men one day there came,  
 A sire and son—Macdonald was their name—  
 To fetch a stone that through the turf appeared,  
 And build it in a cottage they had reared ;  
 But when the stone that lay upon the top  
 The son had carried off it would not stop,  
 But to the *cnoc* came floating through the air,  
 And lay down in its old position there ;  
 A second time he tried, but all in vain,  
 The stone rose up, and hurried home again ;  
 A third determined trial he made, but still  
 The stone returned to the fairy hill ;  
 And at the same self moment, strange to tell,  
 The stubborn youth turned fearfully unwell.  
 His muscles took the cramp, and lumps like eggs  
 Arose upon his arms, as well as legs,  
 He fell upon the ground in pain and fright,  
 And cursed and howled for help with all his might,  
 Nor did he quite recover from the shock  
 Until the stone was buried in the *cnoc*.  
 I wish that every ancient kirk and fort  
 And *cnoc* were built with stones of that same sort,  
 And that the wretch might suffer sharper pains  
 Who would destroy such valuable remains.

On a beautiful evening last autumn, when digging for relics amongst the rubbish that had been thrown from a pre-historic *dun*, or hill-fort, I happened to raise my head above the surface, and seeing a man passing with a fishing rod on his shoulder, asked him, by way of salutation, "Are you going to fish?" This was an extremely unlucky question, probably aggravated by the grave-like quarter from whence it came, and the man, without answering a word, turned about and trudged home again. I have heard of a woman (who ought to have known better) putting the same question to her husband, who, on the instant, in his anger and vexation, smashed his fishing-rod on the ground.

But the glorious sun of education now shines in Tìree as elsewhere, and the fogs of superstition will, in the course of another

\* Mr J. F. Campbell, in his *Highland Tales*, expresses the opinion that fairies had a real existence—that they were a small race of human beings, who inhabited these islands in distant pre-historic times.

generation, have vanished before it. There are already four Board Schools in the island, and there would be a fifth, were it not that the Ladies' Association, in connection with the Free Church, support a wretched seminary at Ballamartin, which affords the Board an excuse for neglecting its duty and getting a proper schoolhouse erected and permanent teacher appointed; but I believe the ladies have begun to see the mischief they are doing, and are to hand over their school to the Board without delay. The newspapers are withal beginning to circulate in the island, and the proceedings of the rebellious crofters in Skye are watched with special interest.

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#### MR MALCOLM MACKENZIE AND THE BRAES CROFTERS.

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THE reader will recollect that a few months ago Mr Malcolm Mackenzie, Guernsey, generously offered, through the Editor of the *Celtic Magazine*, to pay two years' arrears of rent for the Braes Crofters on condition that the proceedings raised against them in the Court of Session by Lord Macdonald should be at once stopped. This offer was not accepted by his lordship, and, therefore, Mr Mackenzie was not under any further obligation—legal or moral—in the matter. He has, however, generously chosen to make the people a donation of £100, to indicate his opinion of the manner in which they had been treated last year by the proprietor, and the hardship and inconvenience which they had in consequence endured. He decided to pay a whole year's rent of Ben Lee, so that the people might have time to stock it before it became a burden on them by the payment of rent. The consequence of this liberal act is, that the rent being an after-hand one, the crofters will possess Ben Lee for two years before they will have to pay any rent for it themselves, a most decided and substantial advantage to the poor people, after the petty persecution which they had to endure at the hands of their proprietor, and present representative of the great Macdonald chiefs. We take the



following account of the Editor's recent visit to the Braes from the *Free Press* of Saturday, the 24th of February last :—

#### VISIT OF DEAN OF GUILD MACKENZIE.

Dean of Guild Mackenzie, Inverness, who had been to the Braes of Portree this week as the representative of Mr Malcolm Mackenzie, of Guernsey, returned home last night. The Dean's visit and its character having become known in the Braes, the people gathered in large numbers to welcome him. On Thursday morning several of them came towards Portree to meet him, and by the time he was at Gedintaillear, the nearest township, he was in the midst of a large and jubilant crowd. In the course of his interview with the people, he explained that he was there as the agent of Mr Mackenzie, the gentleman who had offered to pay all their arrears if the proceedings against them were stopped; but Lord Macdonald having refused that offer, there was no further claim on Mr Mackenzie. The Dean explained, however, that Mr Mackenzie strongly sympathised with the people in the position in which they were placed, and he was desirous of giving them help. He was to pay the first year's rent of Ben Lee, £74. 15s., and he (the Dean) had purchased a ton of first-class meal from Mr John Macdonald, Exchange, Inverness, which, along with certain sums of money, he was about to distribute among the more necessitous crofters. The Dean then went through the three townships for the purpose of ascertaining the condition of the people, particularly of the widow tenants, with the view of being enabled to distribute the meal and money among the most necessitous. Having satisfied himself as to their condition, he wrote out orders in favour of twenty-eight different persons, and made arrangements with a Portree gentleman who has taken a friendly interest in the people to give the meal to the parties presenting these orders. No one got less than half a boll, and many got a boll each. The widow tenants got most of the meal and nearly all the cash distributed, as, for want of stock to place on Ben Lee, they cannot get the full benefit of their share of the rent paid for it, and matters are thus fairly balanced. The people expressed their gratitude to Mr Malcolm Mackenzie and the Dean in the strongest terms, and hoped that both would long be spared to benefit their fellow-countrymen. They expressed their regret that, in an unguarded moment, they had authorised a reverend gentleman from Inverness (on that gentleman's own suggestion) to communicate with Mr Malcolm Mackenzie on their behalf. The Dean, on returning to Portree, called on Mr Alexander Macdonald, Lord Macdonald's factor, and offered him the Ben Lee rent. Mr Macdonald required a written offer. This the Dean formally gave, stating that, on behalf of Mr Malcolm Mackenzie, he tendered the sum of £74. 15s., being the rent of Ben Lee due by the Braes crofters at Martinmas 1883. This being a payment in advance, Mr Mackenzie conditioned a deduction of 5 per cent., with the view of distributing it among the crofters. The factor could not then give a definite answer, but he stated that an official reply would be sent in due time. The Dean then told Mr Macdonald that he had anticipated there might be some difficulty in their accepting the rent just now, and as he was determined to be relieved of the money, he had arranged with the people that morning to deposit the money in bank in the joint names of the factor and a crofter from each township (whom the people, at his request, had chosen). The Dean thereupon proceeded to the Caledonian Bank, Portree, and there deposited the sum of £74. 15s., payable to the order of Neil Buchanan, Peinchorran; Alexander Finlayson, Balmeanach (one of those convicted of assaulting Martin); William Nicolson, Gedintaillear; and Alexander Macdonald, as factor for Lord Macdonald; it

being expressly declared in the receipt that the money was for the purpose of paying the rent of Ben Lee, and for no other purpose. He at the same time instructed the bank-agent to intimate this deposit to these four gentlemen. The sum distributed by Mr Mackenzie in meal and money amounted to the value of £100.

It appears that some of the poorer Braes crofters have not yet been able to pay their arrears, and to a number of such persons a circular in the following terms has just been sent :—

“Macdonald Estate Office, Portree, 19th February 1883.

“Dear Sir,—I regret to observe that your part of the proposed agreement with Lord Macdonald about your becoming tenant of Ben Lee, in addition to your present holding, has not been fulfilled. I am much disappointed and surprised that this is the case after all that passed on the subject. I shall be ready to receive your rents here during the next three weeks. I regret being under the necessity of reminding you that, unless you pay your rents, you cannot hold your lands. I trust, however, you will be able to make payment, which will be more satisfactory to all concerned.

“Your obedient servant,

“ALEXANDER MACDONALD,

“Factor for Lord Macdonald.”

The Crofters, it is said, complain bitterly that they are now under threat of eviction, while if the generous offer of Mr Malcolm Mackenzie had been accepted, Lord Macdonald would have had his arrears in full, and they would be for the present quite independent.

[In connection with the foregoing, the Rev. James Reid, Free Church Minister of Portree, addressed a letter to the *Daily Mail* of 2nd March, and other newspapers, from which we quote the following :—“Sometime ago the Braes crofters’ dispute about Ben Lee was amicably settled. The people got back the hill at an annual rent of £74 15s. At a comparatively early stage of the contest Mr Mackenzie, Guernsey, appeared as the generous friend of the crofters and a lover of peace and goodwill between proprietors and their tenants, and offered to pay all past arrears of rent for the crofters, on condition that all legal proceedings against them should then cease. This generous offer was not accepted. Mr Mackenzie’s sympathy was not, however, alienated from the people, nor his interest in their welfare at all diminished. In proof of this, Mr Mackenzie, of the *Celtic Magazine*, a true friend of the Highlanders, visited the Braes on Thursday last, and had the pleasure of arranging for the distribution of a ton of meal and some money among the widows and the more necessitous of the crofters, and of depositing in the Caledonian Bank, Portree, a full year’s rent of Ben Lee (£74 15s.) in advance; and all the generous outcome of the sympathy of Mr Mackenzie, Guernsey. To that gentleman the crofters feel deeply indebted for all his genuine interest in them, and they deputed me to offer him, through the press, their most grateful thanks, which I hereby do with very great pleasure indeed.”]

#### OFFICE-BEARERS OF THE GAELIC SOCIETY OF INVERNESS.—

At the Annual Meeting for the election of Office-bearers of the Gaelic Society for 1883, the following were duly elected by ballot :—Chief, The Earl of Dunmore; Senior Chieftain, Alex. Mackenzie, F.S.A. Scot., editor of the *Celtic Magazine*; second do., John Macdonald, merchant, Exchange; third do., Alex. Macbain, M.A., Raining’s School. Hon. Secretary, William Mackay, solicitor. Secretary, William Mackenzie, *Free Press* Office. Treasurer, Duncan Mackintosh, Bank of Scotland. Members of Council—Colin Chisholm, Namur Cottage; Charles Mackay, contractor; G. J. Campbell, solicitor; John Whyte, Porterfield House; A. R. Macrauld, writer. Librarian, John Whyte; Bard, Mrs Mary Mackellar; Piper, Pipe-Major MacIennan.

## ARCHBISHOP TAIT IN RANNOCH.

IN the autumn of 1863, and again in that of 1865, the late Archbishop of Canterbury, then Bishop of London, and Mrs Tait, visited Rannoch for the benefit of their health. All the people in the district, high and low, resident and visitor, were charmed with the urbanity, homeliness, and truly Christian bearing of the distinguished pair; and although the visits they paid were short, the impression made by them on the people of Rannoch are still very vivid, and are not likely soon to fade away.

The Episcopal party put up at the only inn then in Kinloch-Rannoch; and there is a story told, seemingly on good authority, which well illustrates the pious and simple habits of the departed prelate. One day Mrs Tait brought the landlady to the Bishop's room to order dinner. When they entered, his lordship was engaged in reading the Bible. "What shall we have for dinner to-day?" asked his wife in her usual winning way. He raised his head, turned round, put his hands down, one on each knee, and looking so benevolently, said, "My dear, why are you so solicitous about what we shall have for dinner? I am sure our hostess will do her best to serve us; and we will be content with whatever she has to give."

At the instigation of a young lady whose aged husband then had the shootings of Craganour, somebody asked his lordship if he would hold a service in the schoolhouse of Kinloch on the following Sunday. He replied, "I have come to Rannoch not for preaching, but for the benefit of my health; but I shall consult my better-half about the matter." The result of this consultation was that intimation was sent through Rannoch that the Lord Bishop of London was to have morning service in the schoolhouse of Kinloch-Rannoch on the following Sunday; and this notice drew a good audience.

On the Sunday morning before service there was some difficulty as to how and where the Bishop was to get his surplice put on. The schoolmaster was away at his holidays, his dwelling-

house was locked up, and to walk up from the inn dressed in full canonicals was out of the question. A little, handy, facetious carpenter who then lived, and wrought at his trade, in the village, and who, on account of his having been across the Atlantic, was called "American John," came to the rescue. On being introduced as the most suitable "beadle" in the place, John, when the difficulty was broached to him, said, "Well, would your lordship like I should treat you as I should have done were we in the backwoods of America?" "Nothing would please me better," replied his lordship. So John, undertaking the business, led the Bishop into the schoolmaster's peat-house, there put on his surplice, etc., for him, and then remarked with great glee, "England and Scotland are united here to-day!"

The Bishop entered the school-house, and having read the morning service of the Church of England, preached with much acceptance from 1st Corinthians, i. 23-24 verses—"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." The same day, by a curious coincidence, the Bishop of St Andrews drove up from Tummel-Bridge, and held an evening service in the school-room. The Anglican Bishop and Mrs Tait attended. And it was remarked by good judges, that, although a learned and accomplished man, Dr Wordsworth appeared very shaky when preaching in the presence of the Bishop of London!

When all the services of the day were over, the Bishop remarked to Mrs Tait: "The little man that attended me to-day in the peat-house has real Scotch humour in him; and I should like so much if he would go along with us to-morrow to Schiehallion." "By all means," said Mrs Tait, "and I will arrange about bringing him."

On Monday morning at ten o'clock, the following party started for Schiehallion, the Lord Bishop of London, and Mrs Tait, one on each side of "American John" teasing him, and Donald Kennedy, the police constable of the district in plain clothes walking behind them. As they walked along, peal of laughter followed peal from the joyous company. The Bishop evidently understood the true philosophy of life and well-being. With him there was a time for hard study, and a time for gravity

and devotion; and also a time for recreation and hilarious merriment.

Having reached Wester Tempar, they struck south from the county road, and were soon climbing Schiehallion. This mountain, steep, conical, bare and picturesque, rises to the height of over 3500 feet above sea-level, and 2800 feet above the level of Loch-Rannoch; and it is famed among men of science over the whole world, as the mountain selected by Maskelyne for making observations by the pendulum, or for determining the weight of the earth. The remarkably regular shape of the mountain, approximating in its main body to that of the earth, together with the homogeneous structure of the rock of which it is mainly composed, made him fix on Schiehallion, as, on the whole, the subject best adapted for making such experiments on; and this has invested what had always been the most unique and characteristic feature in the scenery of Rannoch with an interest peculiar to itself.

The Bishop had not proceeded very far in his ascent of the mountain when, to use John's expressive words, "he began to blow and pech, and say it was hard work." At length, coming to a green level spot, he stood and looked back. "John," said he, "I don't wonder although you Highlanders love your country. What a glorious sight of lake, imbosomed in green trees and herbage, and beautiful mountains near and far, and that fine river coming winding down the strath glittering in the sun like a long silver thread." "Yes, my lord," said John, "we love our country dearly. I was in America, and I came home for the love I bore to Rannoch." "Do all the poor people love Rannoch in the same way?" asked Mrs Tait. "Yes they do, ma'am," said John, "and if they could make a living at all they would not like to leave the place." "By-the-bye, John," said the Bishop, "I've observed a great many houses knocked down and in ruins here and there throughout Rannoch: will you explain to me what is the cause of that?" "Well," replied John, "I'm sure your lordship can explain better than I can how rams' horns blew down the walls of Jericho; it was also rams' horns that blew down so many walls in Rannoch." "Bravo! John," said the Bishop, "that's very good! I shall never forget your illustration of the walls of Jericho. But who is that nice young man you have taken along

with you?" "Well, my lord," replied John, "Donald Kennedy is his name, a nice well-behaved and intelligent lad, and worthy of a better situation than being our police constable; and I hope your lordship will do something for him." "Well, John," said the Bishop, "I may do something for him for your own sake, and specially as a small return for the lesson you have given me in theology." "Take out your note-book then," said John, "and mark down his name, so that you may not forget." The Bishop laughed, and with great good nature did what he was told.

The party then proceeded to climb, and after many a halt, and talk, and laugh, they at length reached the top of Schiehallion. His lordship and Mrs Tait were overjoyed; and "American John" gave them the names of every peak and loch, and lochlet and castle, to be seen all round from that commanding position. Thereafter they descended, and John was amply rewarded for the information and amusement he had afforded them; but curiously enough the Bishop gave nothing to the police-constable.

The Bishop and Mrs Tait left Kinloch in the course of a few days, and no more was heard of them for some time. At the end of three weeks, however, "American John" got a letter to say that the Bishop of London had secured a situation for Donald Kennedy, worth £100 a-year, with immediate entry. Donald went up to London, entered the situation, and continued to occupy it with great comfort till his death, which occurred two years ago.

"American John" died about three years ago. He was quite an original, and a general favourite in Rannoch. His great British hero was the Archbishop of Canterbury, whom he placed above everybody else, and whose conversations with himself he delighted to recount to people frequenting his workshop. "The Bishop of London is *my* preacher," he would say; "Ah! he's a nice man. I told him so and so." "The Bishop of London, now the Archbishop of Canterbury, said so and so to me, and he is a pretty good authority!" Then he would turn to another subject, "This is how we used to do in the backwoods of America." "Ha! you know nothing: you were never out of Rannoch; I was in America, and know something." Peace be to John, and to his hero the Archbishop!

JOHN SINCLAIR, *Minister of Rannoch.*



THE *SCOTSMAN*, PROFESSOR BLACKIE, AND  
THE HIGHLAND CROFTERS.

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IN a recent issue of the *Scotsman*, Professor Blackie published a letter, which we subjoin, setting forth his views on the present agitation and disturbance among the crofters in Glendale, Isle of Skye. This letter the *Scotsman*, as the special organ of the Scottish Landocracy, could not conveniently swallow, and in trying to dispose of it by a less dangerous process, it lost its head. It has done more; it has thrown away the semblance of any ingenuousness and fair-dealing which innocent people thought had yet remained to it.

Professor Blackie, speaking for himself and those who agreed with him, wrote—"Our sympathies lie emphatically with the law-breakers *in this case*;" that is, with those who had broken the law in Glendale; for he says immediately after, in the same paragraph of which the above quoted sentence forms a part—"We know that *this Glendale* outbreak is a mere symptom of a deeply-rooted social disease for which the land oligarchy and the Land Laws are answerable at the bar of eternal justice." The *Scotsman*, with characteristic unscrupulousness when dealing with an opponent, which no other publication in Scotland has yet attained to, twists this plain statement into a charge against Professor Blackie of sympathising "with law-breakers *as such*."

The Professor further says, and says truly, "that there is no tyranny in Europe—nor even in Asiatic Turkey—practically more grinding than the tyranny which, under our present Land Laws, the lord of the soil, with his commissioner, factor, and ground-officer, *may*, in remote districts, exercise over the Highland crofters." How does the *Scotsman* deal with this carefully-qualified statement? "It is to be read," it says, "as stating that this grinding tyranny is practised." It certainly should have been both written and read to that effect as regards the conduct during the present century of many of the class referred to. Professor Blackie, however, does not go that length about any



lords of the soil, commissioners, or factors, but the *Scotsman* magniloquently declares, notwithstanding, that "it is a baseless calumny to say or to hint that landlords and factors are, *as a whole*, guilty of tyranny and oppression." The italics in these quotations are ours.

Who ever said or hinted any such thing as is here placed in Professor Blackie's mouth. Neither in his letter to the *Scotsman*, nor anywhere else, did he ever say anything of the kind. He has often, in our hearing, and to the knowledge of his unfair and unscrupulous accuser, said the very reverse. No one has written more warmly in favour of good landlords and considerate factors than he has done, and many good specimens of both are, happily, still to be found in the Highlands.

Enough has been said to show the nature of the attack so violently made upon him, but we may fairly ask what right has the *Scotsman* to assume to itself the position which it has done on the Highland Crofter Question? At any rate it is proper in the circumstances that we give a few reasons why it should not be for a moment listened to by any one who has the interest of the native population of the Highlands at heart, for its conductors show singular ignorance of the facts as to the position and interests of the Crofters, and it has never failed to malign and misrepresent them.

The *Scotsman* itself, conducted, as it is, under influences foreign to Scotland and Scotchmen, naturally tries to encourage proceedings in the Highlands, which would obliterate and destroy all traces of Celtic nationality; and, to accomplish this end, it delights in fostering a system by which the southern sheep farmer and the English sportsman monopolise the Highlands, and drive the native population out of the country, caring not whither they go.

While the paper in question has always proved itself the inveterate and uncompromising enemy of the Highland Crofters, this anti-Celtic feeling has, if possible, become more intensified in recent years.

In 1878 the *Scotsman* sent to the Highlands and Islands a "Special Commissioner" to describe the condition of the crofters, whose main purpose seems to have been, if we may judge by results, to misrepresent and vilify them; and he has taken little trouble,

before making his ignorant aspersions, to ascertain the facts. It is capable of proof that he described the whole of North and South Uist, Benbecula, and Barra—a district of country seventy to eighty miles long from north to south, and containing a population of 12,503 souls—without ever leaving the neighbourhood of Lochmaddy. The same state of things can be proved in the case of a wide district of the parish of Gairloch and other West Coast estates. The public were led to believe all this time that the “Special Commissioner” was giving the results of his personal experience, and of his own investigation into the circumstances and surroundings of the people! Were the conductors of the paper cognisant of these facts? We know that letters pointing them out were refused insertion by the Editor.

In February last the *Scotsman* sent another “Special Commissioner” to the West, to give its readers an impartial (!) account of the disturbances in the Isle of Skye, especially in Glendale. Those who knew anything about the subject at once saw, when this Commissioner’s letters appeared, that they were little else than a badly-arranged hash made up from Sir John MacNeill’s Report, the New Statistical Account for the parishes of Bracadale and Duirinish, and stale stories repeatedly told by the factor to ourselves, among others, before the “Special Commissioner” of the *Scotsman* ever visited the Isle of Skye. But this was not all! While he was supposed by the misinformed portion of the public to have derived his information from independent sources, he was actually found to be the guest of the factor for Glendale, from whose residence, at Edinbane, nearly thirty miles from Glendale—the district supposed to have been described—his letters were dated. Here the “Special Correspondent,” sent by the *Scotsman* to Skye when the “Jackal” paid her visit to Glendale, actually found the “Special Commissioner” of his journal, presumably much to his disgust and annoyance; for the position of affairs had been discovered by the other representatives of the Scottish and English press who visited Skye on that occasion, and who, with many of the natives, naturally chuckled and sneered at the supposed impartiality of the information obtained and published by the *Scotsman* under such conditions. It may be stated that the “Commissioner’s” recall soon followed the arrival of the “Special Correspondent” at head-

quarters, and it may be fairly surmised that there was some connection between the one event and the other. A few of the natives are wicked enough to say that some fat sheep had almost simultaneously disappeared from the district, but what became of them has not been clearly ascertained. It is, however, quite understood that no one but the owner is in any way responsible for their disappearance.

An exposure of the sources from which the *Scotsman* and a few other newspapers receive their Skye local correspondence might prove interesting, and we may yet feel called upon, in the interest of the people of Skye, to enlighten the reader on that subject.

May we not meanwhile fairly ask, Is this a paper which the Scottish people ought to accept as a safe guide on any question affecting the Highlanders? Its very name has become a misnomer in recent years, edited, as it is, by an English Catholic, under whose guidance the once renowned and brilliant *Scotsman* in spirit and objects, as well as in name, has become the violent antagonist of institutions the most highly cherished and revered by Scotsmen, and whose attacks upon these are only equalled by its ridicule of the Catholic Church, religion, and creed. It is impossible for any good Scotsman not to feel regret for the fall in recent years of a paper in which we all felt a natural pride from a position in which intellectual power and marked ability were its distinguishing characteristics, to one of mere common-place, in which it is principally distinguished by disingenuousness of argument and personal scurrility.

The support by the *Scotsman* of any one, under its present guidance, is the surest proof that he who secures it is no real friend of the Highlanders.

The following is Professor Blackie's letter on the Skye Crofters, referred to above, and published in the *Scotsman* of Wednesday, the 28th of February last:—

9 DOUGLAS CRESCENT, EDINBURGH, Feb. 27.

Sir,—As your columns have always been open to the statement of adverse views, and as your tone lately seems to run somewhat sweepingly against the opinions entertained by myself and many members of the Liberal party who have most practical acquaintance with the Highlands, I crave the liberty to state our view of the Skye Crofters' case with all succinctness. Our sympathies lie

emphatically with the law-breakers in this case, and we are strongly of opinion that the real guilt lies with the law-makers—that is, historically, the oligarchs of the soil and the British public, who, after the abolition of the clan system in 1746, made no recognition of the consuetudinary rights of the people in the land, and who, from ignorance or apathy, have allowed laws to remain on the statute-book the direct action of which, when not counteracted by kindly influences, is to override, overwhelm, and at last exterminate the best element of the local population. It is a matter of the smallest consequence, in our view, whether the case for the crofters in the present instance, be legally right or wrong. We know that this Glendale outbreak is a mere symptom of a deeply-seated social disease, for which the land oligarchy and the Land Laws are answerable at the bar of eternal justice. We know, and thousands can rise to testify to it, that there is no tyranny in Europe—nor even in Asiatic Turkey—practically more grinding than the tyranny which, under our present Land Laws, the lord of the soil, with his commissioner, factor, and ground officer, may, in remote Highland districts, exercise over the Highland crofters. With these convictions, we have no hesitation in saying that we regard the Glendale crofters as martyrs rather than criminals—not because they are legally in the right, or because it is in any case right to break the law, but because the law is radically wrong, and by its very nature instigates a healthy human conscience to the violation which it condemns. When the law is unjust, and the devil, so to speak, sits as God's vicegerent on a local throne, it is nothing wonderful that rebellion should break out, and that the rebels should in such cases be not seldom the very select and elect of the land. Such rebels were the Milanese, who revolted against the Austrian rule in Lombardy, and drew out their lives sorrowfully in the dark cells of Moravian prisons. Such rebels were our gallant forefathers—the men who fell at Rullion Green, Aird's Moss, and Bothwell Brig, and shed their blood to purchase for us liberty to breathe on our own Scottish soil, and to read our own Bibles without Anglican dictation. Whatever deeds of blood were perpetrated during the whole seven-and-twenty years of Charles II. and his pig-headed successor were done with the sanction of the law; and on a smaller and less bloody field the extirpation of the noble race of mountain peasantry that inhabited the once populous Highland glens was done with the sanction of law. The law was always in favour of the men who had the power; never in favour of those whose natural weakness made them an easy prey to the ambition, cupidity, or indifference of their superiors. The law could always be used to enrich the few and to impoverish the many. Laws were made with solemn show and executed with unsparing severity, to preserve the game, but never to preserve the people. This is our view of the matter. Instead, therefore, of hastily blaming these unfortunate people, let us go to the root of the evil, and not, like quack doctors, treat a skin disease with external lotions and superficial appliances, when the only cure lies in reforming the whole habit of social life, and sending a strong current of fresh blood through the veins. Let us unite heart and hand for a radical reform of all landlord-made law! This is my programme; and I am ready to stand by it, though it should rain laws from the statute-book as thick as pike-staves upon the land. Land Law reform is the only banner under which the Liberal party can hope to gain glorious victories at the present hour; and, if they should fail to see their opportunity, and timidly take counsel from law cunningly confused with right, and from a political economy which confounds well-being with wealth, the Tories may act more wisely. They are not the worst landlords in the Highlands, to my knowledge; and if God in his providence should only send us a second Lord Beaconsfield there is no saying what

they might be educated to do. I subjoin a more succinct expression of these sentiments in verse :—

## THE SKYE CROFTERS.

A loud voice blames the men who break the law ;  
 I rather blame who made the laws to break,  
 Who pressed the yoke so close upon the neck  
 Of the hard-driven beast, and rubbed the raw,  
 That in a fretful fit it kicked the board  
 And tossed the rider. Blame your want of skill,  
 Blind oligarchs, and your uneven will  
 To maim the peasant and to arm the lord.  
 Woe unto you, the grasping crew who join  
 Wide field to field, and house to house, that you  
 May live sole lords of earth, and rack and screw  
 The poor to trick forth Mammon's gilded shrine !  
 God is not mocked, whose bolt their head shall smite  
 Who stamp His name on Might and call it Right.

JOHN STUART BLACKIE.

THE PERTHSHIRE CONSTITUTIONAL.—This newspaper, so long and so well conducted by Mr J. Watson Lyall, now better and more widely known as proprietor and editor of Lyall's "Sportsman's Guide," has recently changed hands. The paper, plant, and property have been purchased by Mr Thomas Hunter (the acting editor of the paper for several years back) and by the commercial manager of the publishing department, under whose joint management, we have no doubt, the *Constitutional* will fully maintain its old reputation as a first-class county paper and literary critic.

A HISTORY OF ROB ROY.—Mr A. H. Millar, F.S.A., Scot., of the *Dundee Advertiser*, has just completed a history of Rob Roy, and it is to be issued immediately. The *Athenæum* of Saturday, 17th February, says :—"That the author has made use in it of many of the documents and letters in the collections of the Duke of Argyll, the Duke of Montrose, the Duke of Athole, and Sir Robert Menzies. Many mythical stories which have long been in circulation regarding Rob Roy have been discarded, and the incidents in his career are for the first time placed in proper chronological order. The part which he played in the Jacobite Rebellion in 1715 is carefully explained. A *fac-simile* reproduction will be given of an unpublished plan of the battle of Glenshiel, the use of which the Duke of Marlborough has granted." Mr Millar is already well known in the literary world as the author of "Traditions and Stories of Scottish Castles," and a "Life of Queen Mary." There is no subject of more interest to Highlanders than the famous Rob Roy, of whom a really authentic history has long been desiderated, and Mr Millar is well qualified and has had special facilities to do him justice. The work is to be illustrated by Mr D. Small. The book may be ordered from this office. Price, 3s. 6d., by post, 3s. 9d.

CELTIC MYTHOLOGY.—A series of papers on this interesting subject, by Mr Alexander Macbain, M.A., will be commenced in our May issue.

## HISTORY OF THE CAMERONS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CELTIC MAGAZINE.

SIR,—As a Cameron, interested in the history of my race, perhaps you will permit me at this stage of your account of the Clan to give you a few traditions that refer specially to this period, of which you are writing.

These traditions are valuable, as each item in them is confirmed by the different histories of those stormy times. First, however, let me correct two mistakes in your last issue. You say at page 150 that Donald, son of Ewen Allanson, left two sons, both of whom succeeded respectively to the estate of Lochiel, after the death of their grandfather. Now, instead of two sons, Donald Mac Eoghain left three sons, the youngest being Ian Dubh, or, as he was commonly called, "Ian Dubh Dhruim-na-Saille," his grandfather having given him that place as a "gabhail" or "gavel."

Though Ian Dubh did not succeed to the chiefship, yet he is historically the most important of the three brothers, as his son Allan became chief of the clan in his boyhood, and was the progenitor of all the chiefs from that time to the present day.

The "Sliochd Ian Duibh" sept held Druim-na-Saille until about thirty years ago, when Dr Ewen Cameron, who had served in the East Indiaman "Earl of Balcarres" died suddenly in his prime, leaving a widow—Miss Margaret Kennedy of Lianachan—and an infant son, who immediately thereafter left the place. I believe this son is still in life. My mother's great-grandfather, Allan Cameron, or "Mac Ian Duibh," as he was called, occupied this Ian Dubh's house in the '45, and at it Prince Charles gave forth the counter proclamation offering £30,000 for the head of King George. Over the ford in front of this old historic house Prince Charles led his army across the River Fionna-lith. My grandmother was born in this house, and when my grand-uncle, Dr Donald Cameron, returned to Lochaber, having retired from the Navy after the Peninsular War, he was never called by the people Dr Cameron. It was always "An Doctair Mac Ian Duibh" thus



emphatically declaring him the representative of that sept. The chief, of course, had an older patronymic, although in reality he was, and is, the real "Mac Ian Duibh."

Again, you say that Donald, son of Ewen Allanson, was the progenitor of the family of Earrachd; whereas Ewen was the name, as is proven by their patronymic of "Sliochd Eoghain 'ic Eoghain" unto this day, as his brother John of Kinlochiel's descendants are known as "Sliochd Ian 'ic Eoghain."

These remarks, however, are only by the way—the subject of this letter being emphatically—

TAILLEAR DUBH NA TUAIGHE 'CHUIR AN RUAIG  
AIR MAC-AN-TOISICH.

EOGHAIN BEAG MAC DHO'ILL 'IC EOGHAIN succeeded his grandfather as chief of the Clan Cameron. He never was married, unless, indeed, he was handfasted according to the custom of the time to the lady who was the mother of his son—his only child. The lady was the daughter of Macdougall of Lorne.

This happened when Ewen was very young, and the lady's father concealed his resentment until Ewen was chief. He then, on some plausible pretence, got him to visit him, when he imprisoned him in Inch-Connell Castle, in Eilean-na-Cloiche, Lochow. He was slain there by one MacArthur, whilst his clansmen, headed by his foster-father, Mac 'ic Mhartinn of Letterfinlay, were trying to effect his escape.

His son, "Donull Mac Eoghain Bhig," was in his father's charge from his infancy, and was sent secretly to a tailor's wife, in Blar-na'n-Cleireach, or Lundavra, to be nursed, from which circumstance came the name of "An Taillear Dubh," by which he was known all his life. We find him named Donald, probably for his grandfather, and tradition says that he was brought up by MacIachlan of Coiruanan, hereditary standard-bearer to Lochiel, who became his foster-father.

The boy grew up to be a brave and wise man, famous for his powers of sarcasm and ready wit, but more so for the skill with which he wielded his battle-axe, the great weapon of the warriors of Lochaber. From this distinguishing qualification came his sobriquet of "Taillear Dubh na Tuaeighe," which has clung to him through the ages.



It is said that when John of Kinlochiel and Ewen of Earrachd murdered their chief, "Donull Dubh Mac Dho'ill 'ic Eoghain," they thought the chiefship and estate would fall into their own hands, but in this they were sorely disappointed, for the widow of the youngest of their three nephews gave birth to twin sons. The eldest was, of course, at once proclaimed chief, whilst the youngest, who was Tanaistear, fell heir to the "gavel" of Druim-na-Saille, and became the ancestor of the Camerons of that branch.

Tradition says that the mother of these twin boys was a Mackintosh, and that she hated the clan of her spouse with a great hatred.

As the mother of young Lochiel she went to live in one of the homes of the chief, "Eilean na'n Craobh," and it is there that we find "Donald," or rather "Taillear Dubh na Tuaighe," first appearing prominently in tradition.

The "Taillear" hated the Mackintoshes, and nothing pleased him better than to wield his axe against them on the battle-field.

He, in return, was hated by the Mackintoshes, especially by Ian Dubh's widow, and by John of Kinlochiel, and Ewen of Earrachd, the sons of the second wife of Ewen Allanson, Marjory Mackintosh, said by some historians to be daughter of Lachlan Badenoch, and not of Duncan Mackintosh, as is said in the Memoirs of Sir Ewen Cameron of Lochiel, quoted by you on this head.

On the first occasion in which the "Taillear Dubh" appears in tradition as a hero he must have been a young man. There had been a skirmish with the Mackintoshes, in which many of them were slain. The "Taillear" was the person deputed to carry the tidings to the lady at "Eilean na'n Craobh," a task which many a brave man would shrink from, knowing the strong nature and the Mackintosh proclivities of the lady. The "Taillear" went fearlessly, and walked straightway into her presence, battle-axe in hand. The lady cried out sternly, "Thig a nuas, a Thaillear, ach fag do thuagh shios" (Come in, tailor, but leave your axe without), to which the young warrior responded, "Far am bi mi fhein bi' mo thuagh" (Where I will be my axe will be).

"Ciamar a chaidh an latha?" (How did the day go?) asked the lady.

"Oh!" cried the tailor, "gheibheadh tu bian cait air da pheighinn agus rogha is tagha air plane" (You could get a cat's skin for twopence, and pick and choice for a plack). On hearing this, the lady in a rage threw the infant heir into the fire, and in a moment the "tailor" lifted his battle-axe above her head, crying—"A bhean a rug an leanabh tog an leanabh" (Woman who gave birth to the child, lift the child) which she instantaneously did.

There was then a council held among the clan as to what was to be done with this unnatural mother, for it was not thought safe to leave their young chief in the hands of one who had proved so unworthy of her position.

They decided, therefore, to send the lady back to her own people, as she had forfeited all right to be considered a member of the Clan Cameron. The manner in which this resolution was carried out was as follows:—She was placed on horseback with her face to the animal's tail, and so driven within the boundary line of the Mackintosh domains. She was accompanied by a few Mackenzies who had come from Brahan Castle to assist the Camerons in that day's battle.

The Mackenzies were afterwards rewarded by getting land on the estate of Lochiel, and their descendants are in North Ballachulish to this day. It would fill a book to tell of the feuds between this alien race and "Sliochd a Ghamhna Mhaoil Duinn," which was the patronymic of the Camerons of Onich, who were descended from an illegitimate son of a Mac-Sorlie of Glen-Nevis. The clan also resolved not to leave the infant chief to the guardianship of his grand-uncles of Kinlochiel and Earrachd. He was, therefore, sent to Mull, probably to the widow of his uncle, Donald Dubh, who was a lady of the Duart family. "Donull Mac Eoghain Bhig" or "Taillear Dubh na Tuaighe" went meantime to reside with his grandmother, Lady Grant of Grant, from which place he was in the course of time called by a party of his clan, that he might protect them from the oppression of Kinlochiel and Earrachd, who were acting in a most autocratic manner towards them.

The "Taillear" became again their leader in battle, and it is said that in every field in which he fought against the Mackintoshes he was victorious. So successful was he that the people

began to suspect that he had a fairy origin, and that a special charm was upon him. He was not only famous for his use of the "axe," but was fleet-footed as the mountain deer, which stood him in good stead on one occasion. He was out hunting, and accidentally fell into the hands of the Mackintoshes. They were quite jubilant over his capture, and longing to see his blood shed.

"Had I fallen into your hands like this what would you do with me?" asked the Mackintosh of his captive.

"I would at least give you a chance for your life, and if you could get free I would let you," replied the "Taillear."

"Then I shall do so with you. You will not have to say you outstrip the Mackintosh in generosity," exclaimed the chief. He then formed his men into a ring, with the "Taillear" in the centre, saying, "Men, present your arms, and if he rushes upon you it will but make an end of him the quicker."

The "Taillear" began to wield his battle-axe, as if trying to make an opening here and there, by which he could escape. He threatened to break the circle at different points, and at length his quick eye saw where the men were beginning to be off their guard, and, making a sudden dash, he sprang from what seemed the arms of death. He ran as fast as his fleet feet could carry him, pursued by his enraged enemies, the foremost among them being their chief. At last the "Taillear" came to a broad ditch which he leaped lightly, and got safe across. The Mackintosh leaped after him, but fell into the mire. The "Taillear Dubh" raised his axe above his head, and said to the floundering chief, "Dh'fhaodainn, ach cha dean mi." "I might, but I will not." The Mackintosh, pleased with the generosity of his foe, waved his men back from the pursuit, and the "Taillear" gave him his hand and pulled him out of the ditch.

The place where this happened is not far from the banks of the Caledonian Canal at Gairloch. The spot where he made the leap is to this day called "Leum an Taillear," and the ditch, though now filled up, still bears the name of "Lochan Mhic-an-Toisich."

Mucomer was the scene of his last battle with the Mackintoshes, and on the evening of that day he was seen climbing the mountain side at Coilleros, where there runs a stream

known as "Ault-gormshuil," called after the celebrated Lochaber witch of that name. The "Taillear Dubh" was never seen in Lochaber again. All sorts of surmises were made about his disappearance. Some said he was murdered by command of the young chief, Ailean MacIan Duibh, who had now returned home. The enemies of the "Taillear Dubh" had made the young lad believe that he wanted to be chief himself; that he was stealing the hearts of the people with that intention; and that he asserted his being the child of a lawful marriage, and therefore not illegitimate. It is said that the chief believed these tales, and consented to the death of his relative. When he, therefore, disappeared, there was great indignation among his friends, who believed him to have been murdered.

Those who believed in his fairy origin thought now that he had gone back to his people, having fulfilled the work given to him to do. Others said that, being tired of fighting, he had retired to some Monastery, and that he was seen in the district of Cowal.

So great a favourite was this brave and unselfish man among his people, that their indignation waxed so hot against their chief as to make him again leave the country. The clan believed that he had consented to the murder of their hero; therefore, he did not feel safe among them, and he retired to Appin until their fury would abate.

Now comes a page of this history that proves truth to be stranger than fiction. After the fate of this brave man had been enveloped in darkness for centuries it is now accounted for, and made clear; and it is proved that the "Taillear Dubh" did seek safety in Cowal, where he married and left a family, and we find at the present day one of his descendants in the Reverend Dr Taylor, Professor of Church History in the Edinburgh University. The name of Taylor evidently came from "Cloinn an Taillear"—"The Children of the Tailor"—referring of course to the sobriquet of "Donull Mac Eoghain Bhig."

Without knowing that any tradition existed in Lochaber about their ancestor, the Taylors of Stratheachaig knew that he was named "Taillear Dubh na Tuaighe," that his real name was "Donald Dubh," and that he was the offspring of a chief of Lochiel. On one of the oldest tombstones of the family the "Tuagh" or "battle-axe" is carved—not the more modern, long

handled, prettily designed Lochaber axe, but the old, deadly-looking one, having a short handle, with a rope attached to it, and which was the axe always used by the leaders in battle, a specimen of which is in the hands of Mr Colin Livingston, Fort-William. The Maclachlans of Strath-Lachlan were said to be descended from the Camerons, and to be related to the Maclachlans of Coiruanan, and that may have been the link that led him to that district for safety; or it may have been that his maternal grandfather got the Earl of Argyll to give him a holding there.

The "Taillear Dubh" was in special danger from the families of Earrachd and Kinlochiel, as in defence of the absent chief he had been the cause of the death of these veteran relatives, who were playing into the hands of their kinsmen, the Mackintoshes. Ewen of Earrachd was murdered at Inverlochy, where the opposing parties of the clan met in council; John of Kinlochiel was beheaded at Dunstaffnage by order of the Earl of Argyll, whom the "Taillear Dubh" got to espouse the quarrel through the influence of his grandfather, Macdougall of Lorne. When "Allan Mac Ian Duibh" returned again to take the power into his own hands and reign, he came to understand that his relative, "Donull Mac Eoghain Bhig," *alias* "Taillear Dubh na Tuaighe," had always been his best friend. He heard of how he had saved him from his heartless mother, and had watched over his interests through all the years of his absence. Then he was sorry that he had blamed him wrongfully, and to make amends, as well as to please his offended clan, he paid the memory of the brave man the compliment of placing him in his coat of arms as supporter on either side, with his battle-axe held up conspicuously. There he remains still, and his name lives in the songs, proverbs, and traditions of his native land; and next, perhaps, to the great Sir Ewen, he is their ideal warrior and hero. His name awakens their pride and their affection; and as long as there is a Cameron in Lochaber, or Gaelic spoken, there the name of "Taillear Dubh na Tuaighe" will be remembered.

I am, &c.,

MARY MACKELLAR.

## A RUN THROUGH CANADA AND THE STATES.

BY KENNETH MACDONALD, F.S.A., Scot.

## V.—TORONTO.

BETWEEN four and five in the afternoon we made a short stoppage at the city of Kingston, at one time the capital of Upper Canada, a city which is of peculiar interest for a Highlander, as the home of Evan MacColl, the Bard of Loch-Fyne, a poet whose works are read by Highlanders all over the world; and not only himself a poet, but the father of Mary MacColl, the talented authoress of "Bide a Wee," a collection of poems by the daughter in no way inferior to those which have come from the father's pen. At this time it was my intention to pay a visit to Kingston on my return journey, but this intention I was unfortunately not able to carry into effect. I had wished to make the acquaintance of the bard, but I discovered in Toronto that, at the only time I could have paid a visit to Kingston, he was in another part of Canada. The railway line passes to the rear of Kingston, so that I was not able to see much of the city; but the fact that next to Halifax and Quebec, it is one of the strongest fortified places in the Dominion, makes it interesting to the visitor. Its fortifications, however, I did not see, and of course cannot describe, except by borrowing from sources which are equally available to my reader as they are to me.

About eight in the evening I parted with my friend Mr Fraser, who had to travel by a branch line, and thereafter by steamer on Lake Ontario to reach his destination; and for the remainder of my journey to Toronto, which occupied nearly three hours, I roamed about from seat to seat, and car to car, seeking the American of the books—the man who would talk on the slightest provocation, or none at all—but I did not find him. About 11 P.M. Toronto was reached, and within ten minutes afterwards, while I was attending to my baggage, I was made aware, by loud cheering in another part of the Depôt, that a special train which had been coming after us the whole day, had arrived, bearing the Marquis and Marchioness of Lorne, who were then just after setting out on their tour to British Columbia.



The day had been an unpleasant one—perhaps the most unpleasant during my whole tour—rain having poured in torrents during the greater part of it, and I was glad to reach my snug quarters in the Walker House, where, after supper and a bath, I slept the sleep of the weary. In the morning I devoted an hour to the examination of a map of the city, and made myself as familiar as a stranger can by means of a map with the various tramway routes. This done I sallied forth to make myself practically acquainted with the city; and following a habit which I can recommend to anyone who wishes to get quickly familiar with a large city, I stepped on the first street car I encountered, and from it, after a while, I transferred myself to another, and still another, until in the course of a very short time I traversed a considerable part of the city, and made myself familiar with the situations and directions of the principal thoroughfares.

The city is situated on the shores of Lake Ontario, about thirty miles from its western end. The portion of the city next the Lake is situated on rather low ground, but the ground rises with a gentle slope, until a few miles from the Lake shore the top of a gently sloping ridge is reached, from whence the visitor can look down upon the city, and see it stretched like a panorama below him. The site was chosen in 1793 by Governor Simcoe, the first Governor of Upper Canada. At that time the name of the future city was York, and the predecessors of the men who now proudly call Toronto the "Queen City of the West," knew their town as "Muddy York," and one of them described it as "fitter for a frog or beaver meadow, than a habitation for human beings." The Governor, however, was far-sighted enough to see that the situation of the city as a commercial centre would more than compensate for the natural defects of its situation, and the marvellous progress which Toronto has made in the 90 years which have elapsed since its first houses were built, justifies the wisdom of its founder. When the site was chosen it was little better than a marsh, and the swampy ground gave rise to agues and fevers to such an extent that the settlement of the city was very much retarded in its earlier years. Another circumstance contributed to retard its progress. This was the great European war at the end of the last century, and the beginning of the present, which, by destroying the men who might otherwise have become



emigrants, prevented the natural growth of the colony. Nearly thirty years after its foundation it had less than 1400 inhabitants, but soon after it began to grow more rapidly, and in 1856 it had a population of over 40,000. In 1859 the seat of the Government was removed from Toronto to Quebec, and this tended to reduce the population somewhat, but since that time the city has advanced with marvellous strides, and its population now amounts to about 90,000; or, if Yorkville, a suburb on the north of the city, is included, to about 100,000. At the time of my visit, a vote was taken in Yorkville on the question whether they should unite with the city of Toronto, when, by a large majority, the inhabitants declared for union, so that now Yorkville is actually a part of the city of Toronto.

When the site of the city was chosen by Governor Simcoe, the only inhabitants were two families of Indians. Ninety years is not a long period, even in the history of an American city, yet I did not wholly realise the comparatively brief space in which Toronto has grown to its present size, until in course of conversation with Mr Harman, the City Treasurer, he informed me that his grandfather, who was one of the earliest settlers in Toronto, had seen Indian wigwams on the site where the Grand Trunk Railway Station now stands. The present name of the city is more modern even than the city itself. York became Toronto during the Governorship and at the instance of Sir John Colborne. The derivation of the later name is somewhat obscure, one opinion being that it is derived from the Mohawk *Dr-on-do* "trees on the island," another that it is derived from an Indian word meaning "place of meeting." Between the two opinions I cannot decide. The name has a pleasant sound, and both parties are agreed that it is an old and an Indian one.

The principal street of the city is King Street, which runs east and west, almost parallel to Lake Ontario, and at no great distance above it. It is a fine spacious street, and on each side is lined by magnificent buildings which would do credit to any city, either in the old or in the new world. The street is already built upon for a distance of three miles, and it is being rapidly extended at both ends. Next in importance, if not, indeed, equal to it, is Yonge Street, which, beginning at Front Street, nearer the Lake than King Street, and parallel to it, runs northwards, in-

tersecting King Street, and dividing the city into two almost equal parts. When I asked in Toronto the length of Yonge Street, the reply was "30 miles," and this is substantially true, for buildings extend all along the line of Yonge Street to Holland Landing, to which it leads. Apart from its great length, Yonge Street is historically interesting, for it dates back to the days of Governor Simcoe, who fixed upon the site of the city. The Governor seems to have been one of the most clear-sighted men who ever ruled Canada, and in 1794 he opened up the road, now known as Yonge Street, as a portage from Lake Ontario to Lake Simcoe. By this means he shortened and cheapened the route to Mackinaw, then the great depot of the fur trade. On the opening of this route, the North-West Fur Company, which was established by Frobisher and Mactavish of Montreal in 1782, and which in 1796 employed 2000 hands, instead of sending their supplies by the River Ottawa by canoes, sent batteaux by the St Lawrence. These were carted across the portages (one of which was Yonge Street), and delivered their cargoes in Mackinaw at a saving of £10 to £15 per ton.

What curious visions this history brings up! Who, now travelling in Canada in a Pullman car, or Palace steamboat, remembers that at a comparatively recent date the whole commerce of Canada was carried on by means of the birch-bark canoe or the large batteau, and yet so it is? The birch-bark canoe, which might be anywhere between 9 and 30 feet in length, was navigated along the Canadian rivers and lakes where they were navigable, and when the navigation came to an end, the cargo was unloaded, and carried on the backs of the voyageurs to the next navigable water, the canoe being carried in the same way. This was called the portage. At the end of the portage, the canoe was launched, the cargo laden, and the water journey resumed. In this way hundreds of miles of country were traversed, and thousands of tons of merchandise transported. Prior to the opening up of the route from Lake Ontario to Lake Simcoe by the road which is now Yonge Street of Toronto, the Great North-Western Depot of the Fur Trade was reached by canoe; but with the opening up of this route the larger class of boat known as the batteau came to be used. The batteau is a large flat-bottomed skiff, sharp at both ends, about 40 feet long, and 6

to 8 feet wide in the middle, and capable of carrying about 5 tons. When these reached the end of the navigable water, they were either dragged by means of ropes by men and oxen up the shallow rapids, or were unloaded, and carted across the portages. They were provided with masts and lug sails, an anchor and four oars, and a crew of four men and a pilot. Their draught of water, with 40 barrels of flour on board was only 20 inches, and as they could not be capsized in the excitement of a rapid, and were able by their light draught to creep along shallow waters, they were found in many cases preferable to the canoe, when considerable quantities of goods had to be transported. These clumsy-looking, but very serviceable, vessels were for many years transported along the route, part of which now forms one of the busiest thoroughfares in Canada. By-and-bye the batteau was to some extent replaced by the larger Durham boat or barge, which held its own until both were superseded by the railway and steamboat. The birch-bark canoe still retains very much of its own place in the further away districts of the new world, where the backwoodsman will set out alone on a journey of several weeks duration with his canoe. During the day it will transport him along the rivers and lakes, and at night it forms when turned over, his protection from rain and dew.

But to return to Toronto. Like most other Western cities, it is yet in its timber age. The streets are paved with wooden blocks where they are paved at all; the footways are formed of planks, many of them very fine pieces of timber from fifteen to eighteen inches in width; and the curb and gutters are formed of the same material. Away from the business part of the city, many of the houses are entirely built of timber, and the roofs are covered with shingles.

Everywhere throughout the city there are magnificent public and private buildings. The residence of the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, fronting Simcoe and King Streets, is designed in the modern French style of architecture. The walls are of red brick, relieved with Ohio cut stone dressings, with galvanised iron cornices painted to imitate stone. This material is apparently found suitable to the climate of Ontario. The main building is three storeys in height, and has a Mansard roof in which part of the third storey is situated. In the centre of the building, as seen from Simcoe Street, there rises a tower 70 feet high, finished

with a handsome wrought iron railing. The main building has a frontage to King Street of about 90 feet, and the kitchen wing, which is two storeys high, about 100 feet more. The main entrance is under the tower facing Simcoe Street, and is covered by a handsomely carved porch supported on clusters of Corinthian columns. The whole building, though somewhat ornate in detail, has a substantial appearance, and until its full extent is seen might be mistaken for the residence of a wealthy merchant, rather than the official residence of the Governor of a large Province. Perhaps the most beautiful building in Toronto, however, is the Osgoode Hall, which is named after the Hon. Wm. Osgoode, the first Chief Justice of Upper Canada. This building I only saw the outside of during my first visit to Toronto, but on my return I was taken through the whole of the interior by Colonel Denison, the Stipendiary Magistrate of Toronto. The building is of the classic style, and the Central Hall is one of the most beautiful I have seen. The building contains Court-rooms and offices for the Superior Law Courts of the Province, and it also contains a very fine Library. In the various parts of the building there are portraits of the Judges who have from time to time occupied seats on the bench of the Supreme Court, and if I recollect aright a fine portrait of Lord Dufferin, the most popular of Canadian Governors General.

One of the first buildings which the visitor to Toronto will observe, is Saint James's Cathedral. This is the principal Episcopal church in the city, and it is the fourth church which has occupied the same site, the last one having been burnt thirty or forty years ago. It is of early English architecture, and is beautifully executed. About 10 years ago the tower, which is 150 feet high, was completed. The spire, which is 306 feet high, is said to be the highest in America. The clock, which took the first prize at the exhibition of Vienna, was presented to the Dean and Church Wardens on Christmas eve, 1876. The movement of the clock is the largest in the world, except that of Westminster. It plays the Cambridge chimes on the smaller bells every quarter of an hour, and strikes the hour of the day on the largest bell. During the day the noise of the street traffic to a considerable extent drowns the chimes, but at night, the sweet tones of Saint James's are heard over a large portion of the busiest part of the city.

After an hour spent in going through the streets, I called upon Mr Hugh Miller, to whom I carried two letters of introduction, one from his relative, Mr Cumming, Allanfearn, and the other from the Editor of the *Celtic Magazine*. From Mr Miller I received a warm welcome, as every person hailing from the capital of the Highlands does. Forty years ago he left Inverness and settled in Toronto, and he has been witness to the many changes which have taken place in the latter city in that period during which it has grown from a town of 14,000 inhabitants to its present size. Through Mr Miller I made many new acquaintances in Toronto, from all of whom I experienced the greatest kindness. I was desirous before going further West to know something of agriculture in the Province of Ontario, and the advantages which that province offers to emigrants, and having informed Mr Miller of this, he accompanied me to the office of the Immigration Department, when Mr Spence, the secretary, not only supplied me with a pile of literature on the subject, but afforded me information which no book supplies. Ontario, while it has no prairie land to give free grants of to settlers, has advantages of its own to offer to immigrants. It has many cities and towns, and a great portion of its land has been settled and under cultivation for a long time. The farmers are, as a rule, well to do, and an immigrant without means of stocking land of his own can obtain employment for himself and his family, on terms which will enable him, while gaining valuable experience, to save money, while he lives in a manner which, when compared with the life of an agricultural labourer at home, is comparative luxury. After a few years spent in this way the servant may, if he prefers to remain in Ontario, obtain a grant of land in the unsettled part of the province, and although his agricultural pursuits will be interfered with for a time by the timber on his land, he will find a market for the wood at a price which will more than compensate him for his labour in cutting it. The land which has not yet been taken up in Ontario is comparatively poor, and if the intending farmer is not able with his own capital, and what he can borrow, to purchase a clear farm, his better course is admittedly to go West, where, with the experience he has gained, he will be able, if he is industrious and intelligent, to make for himself a comfortable home.

K. M'D.

*(To be continued.)*

## THE ROYAL COMMISSION AND THE HIGHLAND CROFTERS.

A ROYAL Commission to inquire into the condition of the Highland Crofters has just been granted by the Government. When the writer of these lines first suggested the appointment of this Commission, as far back as 1877, the idea was generally considered ridiculous, but it is now an accomplished historical fact. The Editor of the *Celtic Magazine*, on the 17th of October 1877, asked Mr Charles Fraser-Mackintosh, M.P., while addressing his constituents in the Music Hall, Inverness, the following question, amid the general laughter of the audience :—

Keeping in view that the Government has graciously considered the reputed scarcity of crabs and lobsters, and of herrings and garvies, on our Highland coast, of sufficient importance to justify them in granting two separate Royal Commissions of Inquiry—will you, in your place in Parliament, next session, move that a similar Commission be granted to inquire into the present impoverished and wretched condition and, in some places, the scarcity of men and women in the Highlands; the cause of this state of things; and the most effectual remedy for ameliorating the condition of the Highland Crofters generally?"

Mr Fraser-Mackintosh made the following reply, which, with the question, will be found in the local papers at the time :—

A Member of Parliament had a certain power, and only a certain power. Now, the question which was here raised was a very large one, and he did not think that he would have the slightest chance of getting such a Commission as was referred to, unless the Government was prepared for the demand beforehand, and unless the request was strengthened by a general expression of feeling in its favour throughout the country. If Mr Mackenzie, who had written an able article on the subject, which had attracted great attention, and others with him, could by petition, or by deputation to the Prime Minister, pave the way for a motion, he would be very glad to make it. His moving in the matter without adequate support would hamper and hurt the laudable object Mr Mackenzie had at heart.

Since that date the question has never been lost sight of, and influential Highlanders extended their support in public and in private to pave the way for action in the House of Commons. The Gaelic Society of Inverness soon after petitioned Parliament in favour of a Royal Commission of Inquiry. Towards the end of 1880 a public meeting, held in Inverness, and presided over by Mr Fraser-Mackintosh, M.P., petitioned in favour of it; the Fede-



ration of Celtic Societies took the matter up; the Gaelic Society of Perth; the Highland Law Reform Associations of Inverness and Edinburgh got up large meetings, and petitioned Parliament; Mr Fraser-Mackintosh, M.P.; Dr Cameron, M.P.; Mr Dick Peddie, M.P.; Sir George Campbell, M.P.; D. H. Macfarlane, M.P.; and others, kept the question before the House of Commons and the country; and, on the 22nd of February last, Mr Fraser-Mackintosh, M.P., got up a Memorial, signed by twenty-one Scottish Members of Parliament, to the Home Secretary, which was forwarded, accompanied by the following letter:—

5 Clarges Street, W., 23rd Feb. 1883.

DEAR SIR WILLIAM,—I have never taken up your time by letter or interview before in reference to the state of the crofter and rural population of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland; but now feel constrained to do so.

It is upwards of two years since I presided at a public meeting at Inverness, where the position was discussed, and enquiry desiderated. A notice on the subject was put on the paper of the House by me in the summer of 1881, and again early in 1882. A formal resolution praying for inquiry by Royal Commission was tabled. I was, however, never lucky enough to get a first place for the discussion, and I have failed for any night open prior to the ensuing Easter Recess.

In these circumstances, feeling very unhappy at the present state of matters, and believing that many of my poor countrymen are looking to me for Parliamentary assistance, I beg to represent to you as strongly as I can that—

1st. The people themselves desire such inquiry; and on this I may refer to a curious petition presented by me on Wednesday from Glendale, to all appearance the true and unprompted views of the crofters.

2nd. The public in Scotland by numerous meetings and otherwise show that they concur.

3rd. The press of Scotland, from the *Scotsman* downwards, may be said to be unanimous.

4th. The landlords generally, and officials in the disturbed districts are not averse; and

5th, and lastly, I have felt it my duty within the last two or three days to ascertain the mind of the Scottish members. There are seven members of Government, and one incapacitated, reducing our number for present purposes to 52. Several are not in town, but two are known to have publicly expressed themselves in favour of inquiry, viz., Mr Dick Peddie and Mr William Holmes. Of those to whom I have appealed, 21, including several Conservatives, have signed the memorial enclosed. Seven, though they hesitated to sign, have expressed their approval of inquiry. I have only found four decidedly hostile.

I may, therefore, assure you that a large majority of the unofficial Scottish members are favourable; and this, coupled with what I have said in the preceding four articles, should satisfy the Government no longer to delay.

For my own part, I could not have believed that so soon after the meeting at Inverness in December 1880 the agitation should have gone to such a pitch.

I am as clear as any one that the law should be upheld, yet it will be imprudent

to delay till every legal point be adjusted. I fear new ones will be constantly cropping up.—Yours faithfully.

C. FRASER-MACKINTOSH.

To Sir W. Vernon Harcourt, M.P.

The Memorial, with its signatories, is as follows:—

*To the Secretary of State for the Home Department.*

We, the undersigned Scottish members of the House of Commons, while fully recognising the necessity of vindicating the authority of the law, consider that, under existing circumstances, it is most important that a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the condition of the crofter and rural population of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland should be granted by the Government without delay.

C. FRASER-MACKINTOSH.	S. WILLIAMSON.
GEORGE ANDERSON.	FRANK HENDERSON.
CHARLES CAMERON.	R. W. COCHRAN-PATRICK.
T. R. BUCHANAN.	G. ARMITSTEAD.
G. CAMPBELL.	JOHN C. DALRYMPLE HAY.
J. STEWART.	CLAUD ALEXANDER.
ANDREW GRANT.	JAMES ALEX. CAMPBELL.
ROBERT FARQUHARSON.	ARCHIBALD ORR-EWING.
ALEX. H. GORDON.	G. BALFOUR.
J. W. BARCLAY.	S. D. WADDY.
	PETER M'LAGAN.

22nd February 1883.

The seven members referred to in Mr Fraser-Mackintosh's letter to Sir William Harcourt, as hesitating to sign, were, we understand, Mr Pender (Wick Burghs); Sir Alexander Matheson, Baronet (County of Ross); Sir Donald Currie (County of Perth); Mr Parker (Burgh of Perth); Mr Bolton (County of Stirling); Mr Campbell (Ayr Burghs); and Mr Dalrymple (County of Bute). Those distinctly opposed to any inquiry were—Sir T. E. Colbroke (County of Lanark); Sir H. Maxwell (County of Wigtown); Mr E. Noel (Dumfries Burghs); and Mr Preston Bruce (County of Fife).

Lord Colin Campbell (County of Argyll) has since intimated that had he been asked he would have signed the Memorial to Government. None of the others were seen, as they were either out of London or absent from the House.

It will be noticed, we believe, with very general regret and surprise, that not a single Northern Member of Parliament, except Mr Fraser-Mackintosh, has signed the Memorial. If any proof were wanted that inquiry was looked forward to by the northern landlords with disfavour, and, in some instances, with

dismay—though they feel that it has now become necessary—it would be found in this significant fact. It should also convince the Government of the necessity of making the Royal Commission really effective by placing men upon it who will counteract the landlord opposition and aristocratic influence, which will certainly have to be met in the course of the inquiry on every point where the facts are likely to tell against the landlords and their agents. Unless the other side is strongly represented, so as to meet, on something like equal grounds, the power, wealth, and influence of those whose conduct has made this inquiry necessary, the Royal Commission had better never to have been granted. It will only prove the commencement in earnest of an agitation on the Land Question, the end of which no one can predict.

Considering the stage which the question has now reached, we think we are justified in reproducing what Mr Fraser-Mackintosh writes to us on the 5th of March. He says, alluding to the question put to him by the writer in the Inverness Music Hall, and already referred to—"I see that you put the question very broadly in 1877, and you are therefore alone entitled to the full credit of initiating the movement." The reader will not be surprised if, in these circumstances, we shall watch the composition of the Commission, as well as its proceedings throughout, with more than ordinary interest.

A. M.

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## THE ETHICS OF POLITICAL ECONOMY.

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### III.—WHAT IS RENT?

RELATIVE to the subject of these papers there is an activity of thought, combined with an indefinable feeling that something must be done, which no one is able to understand, and which can only be described by the trite French expression, "It is something in the air." This, indeed, is no less true of the physical world than it is of the world of mind, for with adverse seasons, potato blight, and cattle epidemics, it may well be said "it is something in the air." Events are, therefore, likely to solve the

knotty points of economic science more than the speculations of philosophers. Still, as these speculations appertain to fundamental doctrines which influence human thought and action, in the most important social and economic relations, it is all the more necessary to expose and eliminate error. Legislative attempts at a practical compromise of existing difficulties may effect some temporary relief, but such legislation cannot be of an enduring nature, unless it proceed upon sound fundamental principles.

The space at my disposal in these pages does not admit of such a full examination of the much controverted subject of rent, as its importance, as well as its abstruseness, demands; but without imposing too much upon the good nature of the Editor, or upon the patience of the reader, I may be able to review the discussion so far as to present, in brief outline, what appears to me to produce the confusion of thought regarding it.

I have already called attention to the fact that there are *two principles* of productive industry—the agricultural and commercial—and that the one is *inverse*, whilst the other is *direct*. I have also defined land as natural power, as a correction upon the definition of the utilitarian school, who refer to it as natural monopoly. In taking an ethical view of the subject, the importance of a correct definition must appear, as it leads the mind to consider it in the higher and more important relationship of power to freedom, justice, and equality. Following the example of Adam Smith and his adherents, who place all exchangeable value in labour, I was obliged to give a brief analysis of that subject, and in doing so I was able, at all events, to show that those who place exchange value in utility, materiality, demand and supply, and such like, could not give a logical and intelligible explanation of the phenomena of trade and commerce.

It still remains, however, to be shown how the labour theory of value can explain how an acre of land in the City of London is worth £100,000, whilst another on a Highland mountain side, which neither spade nor plough has tickled into a smiling harvest, is worth only a few shillings, but still possessing exchange value, as proved by the fact that it pays rent. This is the unsolved problem of economic science, and before we can accept Mr George's "remedy," or Mr Russell Wallace's "land nationalisa-

tion," we ought to solve the difficulty, if it is within the compass and comprehension of the human intellect to do so.

In his "History of Civilisation" Buckle mentions the nature of the difficulty, and, as Mr George refers to the passage and has made it the groundwork of his eloquent book, "Progress and Poverty," I quote it:—

"Thus far as to the different ways in which climate and soil affect the creation of wealth. But another point of equal, or perhaps of superior, importance remains behind. After the wealth has been created, a question arises as to how it is to be distributed; that is to say, what proportion is to go to the upper classes, and what to the lower. In an advanced stage of society this depends upon several circumstances of great complexity, and which it is not necessary here to examine. But in a very early stage of society, and before its later and refined complications have begun, it may, I think, be proved that the distribution of wealth is, like its creation, governed entirely by physical laws; and that those laws are, moreover, so active as to have invariably kept a vast majority of the inhabitants of the fairest portion of the globe in a condition of constant and inextricable poverty. If this can be demonstrated, the immense importance of such laws is manifest. For, since wealth is an undoubted source of power, it is evident that, supposing other things equal, an inquiry into the distribution of wealth is an inquiry into the distribution of power, and, as such, will throw great light on the origin of those social and political inequalities, the play and opposition of which form a considerable part of the history of every civilised country."

In a foot note he adds—

"Indeed, many of them are still unknown; for, as M. Rey justly observes, most writers pay too exclusive an attention to the production of wealth, and neglect the laws of its distribution. In confirmation of this, I may mention the theory of rent, which was only discovered about half a century ago, and which is connected with so many subtle arguments that it is not yet generally adopted, and even some of its advocates have shown themselves unequal to defend their own cause. The great law of the ratio between cost of labour and the profits of stock, is the highest generalisation we have reached respecting the distribution of wealth; but it cannot be consistently admitted by any one who holds that rent enters into price."

It will be seen from this quotation that rent is the disturbing element, or unresolved factor, in proportionals, which in free industries are capable of being applied in accordance with a perception of the mind as to some law of distributive justice. Now, if this disturbing element were eliminated, or resolved into some other proportional, or that part of it which cannot be so resolved regarded as an *accruing residuum* belonging to the state, or to society, capable of being ascertained and appropriated, it seems to me that the Rule of Three might be applied to political economy.

It must be explained here to the uninitiated that the rent of land, or, rather that part of the rent of land, which is the subject of perplexity, is what accrues to the landlord over and above the interest upon his expenditure in reclaiming land, building steadings, dykes, and all other ameliorations. Ricardo defined it as a charge made for the use of the indestructible powers of the soil, or, in other words, its germinating property. Both landlords and socialists place value (money value) in this and fight over it. Still further, working upon this notion, he propounded a theory of rent which has been seized upon by materialists, and which Stuart Mill, by a common custom of utilitarians, calls *the law* of rent; for their theories, it should seem, must be regarded as fundamental laws. The ordinary reader, in Scotland particularly, where the will of the landlord is almost the only recognised law of rent, will be very curious to know what this law is. Well, here it is.—

“It is only, then, because land is not unlimited in quantity and uniform in quality, and because in the progress of population land of an inferior quality, or less advantageously situated, is called into cultivation, that rent is ever paid for the use of it. When, in the progress of society, land of the second degree of fertility is taken into cultivation, rent immediately commences on that of the first quality, and the amount of that rent will depend on the difference in the quality of these two portions of land. When land of the third quality is taken into cultivation rent immediately commences on the second, and is regulated, as before, by the difference in their productive powers. At the same time the rent of the first quality will rise, for that must always be above the rent of the second, by the difference between the produce which they yield with a given quantity of capital and labour. With every step in the progress of population which shall oblige a country to have recourse to land of a worse quality, to enable it to raise its supply of food, rent on all the more fertile land will rise.”

The absurdity of this theory must be apparent to every practical farmer, for on every large farm, as well as in every large field, there are varieties of soil of different degrees of fertility. The first tithing that was farmed, or used agriculturally, in England, probably contained all the varieties of soil, of conformation, and of scenery which the aspect of an English county presents at the present day; and yet with no scarcity of land of the same quality round about, the people must have paid rent to the superior, whether sovereign or subject. These *varieties* which render nature so beautiful, and so well adapted as a habitation for man, in producing corn, trees, grazings of all sorts, and cover for fowls,



are by Ricardo termed "gradations," and the misuse of words is very apt to produce confusion of thought.

Land of a low degree of fertility may be raised to a high degree by the application of labour, lime, phosphates, and manures. Besides, in the progress of society, as we know from history, the descent has often been towards deeper and more fertile soils, such, for instance, as the marshes of Lincoln, many of the swamps of Scotland, and in India and on the Continent to the deep and fertile soils of banks and deltas of rivers. Are the free lands in the Western States of less fertility than land in the neighbourhood of New York, or the free lands of Manitoba than lands in the neighbourhood of Montreal? But if situation accounts for rent, what then becomes of the indestructible powers of the soil; but what is the value of any theory of rent which leaves out the ground rent of town lands and rent of mines? The reader must see that to ask these questions is to refute completely the theory as to gradations of soil and descent to lower soils.

At this stage, however, I shall not detain the reader by further illustrations to show the absurdity and falseness of this delusive and pernicious theory which places value in land apart from human labour; but will proceed to show the confusion and uncertainty which an adherence to it produced on so great a logician as Stuart Mill, and by-and-bye we shall examine the dangerous conclusions to which it led Mr Henry George. Mill says:—

"This theory of rent, first propounded at the end of last century by Dr Anderson, and which, neglected at the time, was almost simultaneously re-discovered, twenty years later, by Sir Edward West, Mr Malthus, and Mr Ricardo. It is one of the cardinal doctrines of political economy; and until it was understood, no consistent explanation could be given of many of the more complicated industrial phenomena."

This confident and dogmatic tone pervades the whole of Mill's writings; and yet, with his great command of sophistical argument, he makes such admissions of failure that the subject is made contemptible. In the sequel to this declaration, he says:—

"It is not pretended that the facts of any concrete case conform with absolute precision to this or any other scientific principle. We must never forget that the truths of political economy are truths only in the rough. . . . This constitutes a law of rent, *as near the truth as such a law can possibly be*; though, of course,

modified or disturbed in individual cases, by pending contracts, individual miscalculations, the influence of habit, and even the particular feelings and dispositions of the persons concerned."

The reader will be disposed, I think, to agree with me in the opinion that *a law* which is subject to so many modifications, and requires so many apologies, may be as good in the breach as in the performance.

Without further discussion of the question, it is quite sufficient to mention that *this* political economy, of which it is a cardinal principle, and of which the reader hears so much out of the mouths of landlords, politicians, and public journalists, consists of vicious theories of population, values, and *law of rent*, propounded by Malthus, Ricardo, and Mill, which result in a complete subversion of the fundamental principles laid down and explained by Scotland's greatest philosopher.

As a distinguishing feature of this controversy, it is not a little remarkable that those who are ranged against the utilitarian school, and are adherents of Adam Smith, should not only be distinguished by great power of intellect, but also imbued with a deep sense of the evident order and design of nature, combined with a hopeful view of man's better destiny in the world, and a broad sympathy with labouring and suffering humanity. Of these the most eminent are Dr Chalmers, Dr Whewell, and the brilliant-minded Frenchman, Frédéric Bastiat, whose early death was a great loss to the science, for he left only a few sentences on the subject of rent. Dr Chalmers discussed the theory fully and conclusively, as I think, although Mill passes him over on this point, whilst he quotes him on another of no importance (the consideration of a general glut) where he was more vulnerable. Dr Chalmers refers the theory to a cause which lies at the root of many of the fallacies and confusions connected with land. He says:—

"The real cause of rent is the more strenuous competition of labourers and capitalists, now more numerous than before, and this cause, assigned by Dr Smith, ought not to be superseded, as if it were a distinct and different cause, by that which, in fact, is but a consequence, from itself. *This inversion of the truth has led to vicious conclusions* in political economy; and as is the effect of every false principle, it has mystified the science."

Having thus far briefly reviewed the debateable ground between two schools of economists, regarding the most important

part of it, in its social and political aspect, I shall delay to a future occasion the further examination of the question.

As I have cited so many eminent authors who are opposed to this theory, and seeing that Mr Henry George bases his whole argument upon it, I consider that he makes a very bold assertion when he says :—

“And in accepting the law of rent, which, since the time of Ricardo, has been accepted by every economist of standing, and which, like a geometrical axiom, has but to be understood to compel assent, the law of interest and law of wages, as I have stated them, are inferentially accepted, as its necessary sequences.”

By-and-bye we shall see the value of Mr George's geometrical axioms and arithmetical proportionals ; but in the meantime it is quite sufficient to assert, as a matter of fact, that the most eminent thinkers amongst European economists reject the Ricardian theory, and that hardly any American of note accepts it as a scientific truth.

Guernsey.

MALCOLM MACKENZIE.

(*To be continued.*)

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## Literature.

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*SCOTTISH MYTHS: NOTES ON SCOTTISH HISTORY AND TRADITIONS.* By ROBERT CRAIG MACLAGAN, M.D. Edinburgh : MacLachlan and Stewart.

WHAT Dr Charles Mackay has done for Gaelic etymology, Dr MacLagan has set himself to do for the mythology of the Gael. And he has succeeded to his heart's content ; not only has he drawn our noble heritage of myth into contempt, but he has done more—he has dragged it through the mire. We do not know whether to laugh or to weep over this bad book, a book bad both in style and matter. In the first place, the work is a string of notes, more or less disconnected, without chapters or headings of any kind, yet containing an index, which we found very useful in turning up words to see the different etymologies given at various points in the book for the same word. Again, the work, purporting to be by a scientific man, is thoroughly unscientific. Its history is untrustworthy, save when he quotes ; his ancient geography is much at fault—the catuvelauni on the Thames are classed together with the Miati of Mearns quite indiscriminately. The author does not know the rudiments of mythology, and as to the science of language, he knows absolutely nothing of its principles. With him, truly, consonants count for nothing, and vowels for very much less. His use of the Greek language, for example—for he seriously brings our ancestors from

Thrace and other such places, and his frequent references to the Greek lexicon of Damm, tend to drive the reader to dwell with peculiar emphasis on that author's name. The book deals chiefly with two points—the ethnology and myths of Scotland. From the confused mass of indigested material presented us, we pick out the following facts:—"The invaders of Britain were of various nationalities—Belgian Gauls, Germans, Thracians, &c. Their descendants came to use the language spoken by their Celtic mothers in Alba and Erin; while much of their tradition was derived from their foreign forefathers." And hence it is that Dr MacLagan can lay nearly every language in Europe under contribution to unravel the difficulties of Celtic myths and names. The Roman soldiers—especially the Batavi and Tungri, who turn up at every odd corner in the book, why, we cannot say—mingle with the Scottish natives. Hence "the Scots were illegitimate, the Picts claimed their mother's position in society, the Attecotts, carrying their feelings to a natural conclusion, disliked their fathers, and were called after the two Greek words *atta*, father, and *kotos*, hatred;" while the derivation of the name Scots is from the Greek word *skotios*, "illegitimate," duly found in Damm! Dr MacLagan takes this unpatriotic view of his ancestors for a deep scientific reason; that reason is the phallic worship. Like every beginner in mythologic science, he has a craze for some unity of explanation, and this unity he finds not in the solar worship, of which he says little, but in the phallic worship, by which he explains all sorts of traditions, customs, relics, and names. In fact he reduces every proper name to either a bowl, cup, bell, pillar, altar, pole, or cross; or else to terms signifying love, lust, or wantonness with their physical and other mental concomitants. Even his own name of MacLagan he spares not; it means the son of the bell, and hence its phallic connection. Poor St Fillan may well turn in his grave! The root of the name Fillan is *phallos*, and is seen besides in *Fal* (*lia fal*), *catuvelaunos*, *Valentine*, &c. St Columba fares no better; his name evidently comes from Latin *columna*, a pillar, and hence the sequel. To these derivations we might add hundreds of others equally wild and preposterous; on such principles, or rather such want of principles of philology, any name can be derived from anything, provided the linguistic net is cast wide enough. And, as a consequence, double and even triple derivations are calmly offered us from which to take our choice; sometimes this happens inadvertently. The great Welsh King Cunedda, who lived about the end of the Roman occupation, is identified with Cnaeus Agricola, who lived three hundred years before, for, as he naively puts it, "Cnaeus requires little ingenuity to make it Cunaethus!" No, indeed! Yet in another place this Cunedda is obviously derived as from "*dog-shore*," *conu-aot*! He connects Arthur somehow with Agricola; both their names mean "farmer," and they fought much the same battles, he holds. But we have said too much of this book. We protest against such crude and immature workmanship being foisted upon us under the honoured name of "Scottish Myths."

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MR SELLAR'S TRIAL.—A full report of Sellar's trial in 1816 will be issued by A. & W. Mackenzie, publishers of the *Celtic Magazine*, in a few days. This will give the public an opportunity of judging the whole question for themselves. It has become so rare that it is scarcely possible to procure a copy of it.